

Antonyms, or Clarity by Contrasts

No.1. Introducing the Principle of Contrast, as an aid to Interpretation. pp. 17 - 20

To the average busy reader, eager as he may be for the truth, yet occupied for many hours of the day with the exacting demands of this life, such terms as homonym, synonym and antonym, may appear too much like a piece of pedantry, and we can imagine a few of our readers turning the page in search of something more practical. We ask such however, to stay a moment longer, for nothing can be more practical for the believer than true interpretation of Holy Writ, and anything that contributes to clarity and exactness, or preserves from error should be of supreme value.

When the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians that series of contrasts and asked what fellowship had 'righteousness with unrighteousness', 'light with darkness' or 'Christ with Belial', he was using antonyms, a means of instruction that is very powerful in that it forces the mind to perceive a truth by the strength of contrast. An *antonym* as the word implies, is a term which is the opposite of another, a counter-term. It is allied with a figure of speech called *antonomasia*, which is a change of name, like 'The Iron Duke' for 'The Duke of Wellington'. It is the opposite of *synonym*, which is the name given to two or more words in the same language, which possess the same general sense. The *antonym* is extremely useful in removing the ambiguity caused by *homonyms* in a language. A *homonym* is the name given to words, which though they have the same spelling, have entirely different meanings, such as LET, which means 'to permit, or to hinder, or to hire'. These words entered the language at different times, and the slight distinctions that might have been preserved in their spelling have been ignored. The reader may call to mind many other homonyms of everyday use: 'to lie' has two meanings, 'to baste' has three, and 'court' has four, while 'strike' has to our knowledge at least a dozen: it may mean a stoppage of work by employees, a half bushel basket, a discovery of oil, or the minting of coin; beside the more common use of the verb, to strike a match, or a clock striking the hour, of striking a circle, or of striking a sail; one can even strike an attitude. This English word 'strike' is used in the A.V. to translate no less than ten Hebrew words, and six Greek ones, and as this is a common feature with all versions that do not set out to be literal, the value of some simple means that will lead to the recognition of such homonyms, and the discovery of some means of testing them, will be conceded by all. The *antonym* is exceedingly useful for this purpose. Let us illustrate our meaning by an example. Will the reader answer the following questions? "What is the opposite of 'light' in II Cor. iv.?" Most probably the word 'darkness' comes to most of our minds, and if there were but one reference in II Cor. iv, and that the passage which reads: "God, Who commanded the light to shine", then "darkness" would be the antonym. But there are two references to "light" in II Cor. iv. One whose antonym is 'darkness':

"For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness" (II Cor. iv. 6),

and another, whose antonym is ‘heavy’ or ‘weight’:

“Our light affliction weight of glory” (II Cor. iv. 17).

The ambiguity resident in the English word ‘light’ is resolved the moment we apply the antonym. This principle is of great use where the ambiguity of a word does not reside in the fact that it is an homonym, but that by usage it may have two or more shades of meaning. A most important illustration of this is found in connection with the Hebrew word which is translated ‘evil’ the word ‘*ra*’. This word can mean ‘evil’, in the sense of wickedness, a meaning that is found throughout the whole of the O.T. There are, however, too many passages where the meaning is ‘adversity’, ‘affliction’, ‘calamity’ and the like, for the reader to ignore; and to assume that every occurrence of ‘*ra*’ must of necessity mean moral evil or wickedness is both unwise and unscholarly. Take for example Psa. xxxiv. 19:

“Many are the *ra* of the righteous.”

Can we translate this “Many are the moral wickednesses of the righteous”? We realize that we cannot, and the LXX did not hesitate to use *thlipsis* ‘affliction’. Even when the translation ‘evil’ is a good one, we must be careful not to confuse moral evil with righteous judgment. For example, when the Lord said:

“See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil” (Deut. xxx. 15),

the context makes it plain that the evil that was before Israel was the very opposite of being ‘blessed in the land’ (Deut. xxx. 16), and when the Prophet would emphasize to Israel these alternatives, he says in place of ‘life and good, death and evil’:

“I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing” (Deut. xxx. 19);

which shows that the ‘evil’ of verse 16 was not the moral wickedness of the people, but the righteous judgment of God in sending ‘evil’ in the sense of punishment upon them.

If the reader turns to Ecclesiastes, he will observe that the writer is concerned with what ‘good thing’ a man should pursue in view of abounding vanity and vexation. So, in Eccles. i. 13 “This is *sore* travail” is *ra* ‘evil’, so is the word ‘grievous’ of ii. 17, ‘adversity’ of vii. 14, and ‘misery’ of viii. 6; quite apart from the passages which though they be translated ‘evil’ like “This also is vanity and a great evil” ii. 21 cannot possibly indicate moral evil and wickedness. Turning to the prophet Isaiah we read:

“Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord. Yet He also is wise, *and will bring evil*” (Isa. xxxi. 1, 2).

No one in his senses would believe that Isaiah intends us to understand that God in His wisdom brings moral wickedness upon any one. The remaining verses of chap. xxxi. are a good commentary, and the fact that “He will not call back His words” shows that the judgment threatened by law and prophets upon apostasy would surely fall. So, with regard to that classic passage, Isa. xlv. 7:

“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.”

“Evil: never rendered ‘sin’. God brings calamity about as the inevitable consequence of sin” (*The Companion Bible*).

Even had the phrase read ‘good and evil’, evil would not necessarily have meant moral wickedness, but when its antonym is ‘peace’ we know for a certainty that ‘calamity’ in the form of judgment is the only possible meaning that can be attached to Isa. xlv. 7. *The Companion bible* says, regarding the word ‘create’:

“Heb. the past participle of the verb *bara* (create) which, with ‘evil’, requires the rendering ‘bring about’. Not the same form as in verse 8, 12 or verse 18, in connection with the earth. In Jer. xviii. 11 the verb is *yazar*, to frame or mould. In Amos iii. 6 it is *asah*, to bring about, a word of wide meaning; its sense has to be determined by its context. Here *disturbance* in contrast with ‘peace’.”

It is not our intention to pursue this question of evil, or the correct translation of the Hebrew word *ra*, but this has provided a useful example of the value of the antonym ‘peace’ in deciding the meaning of ‘evil’ in Isa. xlv. 7. Neither is it our intention of dealing with synonym, antonym or homonym in any direct sense in subsequent articles, but to bring before the reader such evident contrasts as ‘Bondage and Liberty’, ‘Flesh and Spirit’, ‘Law and Grace’, with the belief and the hope that positive lessons of spiritual value will most certainly accrue.

No.2. A Study in Galatians.

“Bondage versus Freedom.”

pp. 56 - 60

The Apostle Paul knew the value of contrast in presenting the truth, and his epistles contain a number of helpful examples that will be profitable to study. Upon reading his epistle to the Galatians we are struck with the forcefulness of his use of at least five pairs of opposites.

- (1) “Liberty versus Bondage” (Gal. ii. 4).
- (2) “Works versus Faith” (Gal. ii. 16).
- (3) “Spirit versus Flesh” (Gal. iii. 3).
- (4) “Servants versus Sons” (Gal. iv. 7).
- (5) “Law versus Grace” (Gal. v. 4).

There are lesser examples and some more diffuse than others, but the five selected above are obvious, and beyond doubt, intentional. Liberty, *eleutheria* is a blessed word, both in itself, and in its contrast with all the evils of bondage. The Apostle uses the word seven times in his epistles, as follows:

“The glorious *liberty* of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 21).

“Why is my *liberty* judged of another man’s conscience?” (I Cor. x. 29).
 “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is *liberty*” (II Cor. iii. 17).
 “Our *liberty* which we have in Christ Jesus” (Gal. ii. 4).
 “Stand fast therefore in the *liberty* wherewith Christ hath made us free” (Gal. v. 1).
 “Ye have been called unto *liberty*; only use not *liberty* for an occasion to the flesh”
 (Gal. v. 13).

It will be seen that this quality of liberty is very comprehensive. It reaches forward to ‘the glory’, it is found ‘in Christ Jesus’, it constitutes an element in our ‘calling’, it rules in the realm of ‘conscience’, but it never leads to or countenances ‘license’ or ‘an occasion to the flesh’. Four out of these seven references are found in Galatians, where three of them deal with the positive liberty which we have received, and one with a warning concerning its abuse. *Eleutheria* is probably derived from *eleutho* ‘to come’ and Dr. Bullinger says in his *Lexicon* “*eleutheros*, one who can go where he will, hence, free, at liberty”. *Eleutheros* is found in Galatians six times, five of the occurrences dealing with the allegory of Sarah and Hagar. There is a wealth of teaching which we may not stay to investigate here, but some of our readers may appreciate the help given by the parallelism of these six occurrences.

“Free” in Galatians.

- A | iii. 28, 29. Abraham’s seed and heirs. Cancels “bond and free”.
- B | iv. 22. Abraham’s two sons. One by bondwoman. One by freewoman.
- C | iv. 23. Son of freewoman was by promise.
- C | iv. 26. Jerusalem above is free, and our mother.
- B | iv. 30. Son of freewoman is heir.
- A | iv. 31. Not children of bondwoman but of the free.

Eleutheroo occurs seven times in the whole N.T. Twice in John’s Gospel:

“The truth shall make you free” (John viii. 32).
 “The Son therefore shall make you free” (John viii. 36).

The Apostle preached Christ and stood for ‘the truth of the gospel’ in his fight for liberty, and was in full harmony with the dual statement of our Lord as recorded by John. Four occurrences are found in Romans:

“Being made free from sin” (Rom. vi. 18, 22).
 “Made me free from the law” (Rom. viii. 2),

and a future *deliverance* of the creature from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. viii. 21). One occurrence only is found in Galatians:

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ *hath made us free*” (Gal. v. 1).

Turning to the contrastive word ‘bondage’ we note that in Gal. ii. 4 the Apostle uses the emphatic form, not *douloo* but *katadouloo* “to captivate thoroughly” or ‘to reduce to slavery’. It was this that caused him to put up such a valiant fight for ‘the truth of the gospel’, and for which we can never be too thankful. The following extract from

Dr. John Taylor's *Elements of Civil Law*, throw a lurid light on the condition of a slave in N.T. times.

"The common lot of slaves in general was, in many circumstances very deplorable. Of their situation take the following instances: they were held *pro nullis, pro mortuis, pro quadrupedibus, for no man, for dead men, for beasts*; nay, they were in a *much worse* state than any cattle whatsoever. They had no head in the state, no name, tribe or register. They were not *capable of being injured*; nor could they take by purchase or descent; had no heirs, and therefore could make no will, of course they could not plead, nor be pleaded, but were *excluded from all civil concerns whatsoever*"

In contrast with the idea of *eleutheros*, the right and liberty to come and go at will, *doulos*, indicated a person without rights, simply the property of another, and so bound that to come or go at will was hopelessly impossible and foreign to the estate. The bondage of Rom. vi. is the bondage of sin (Rom. vi. 6), whereas the bondage of Galatians is the bondage of 'elements' (Gal. iv. 3). These 'elements' were either the rudimentary principles of Mosaic law, or the elements of any 'religion' soever—ever that of idol worship.

"When we were children we were in bondage under the elements of the world" (Galatians iv. 3).

"How turn ye again to weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years" (Gal. iv. 9, 10).

This spirit which so grieved the Apostle we shall be able to deal with better when we are considering another set of contrasts namely 'Servant versus Son', for this governs the argument of the opening of chapter iv where we have in verse 3 the only occurrence of *douloo* in Galatians.

Bondage, *douleia* occurs twice:

"The two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to *bondage*, which is Agar" (Gal. iv. 24).

"Be not entangled again with the yoke of *bondage*" (Gal. v. 1).

Peter referred to the yoke of the law saying:

"Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts xv. 10),

and Paul uses this figure to indicate literal slavery, saying:

"Let as many servants (*douloi* slaves) as are under the yoke count their own masters (*despotes*) worthy of all honour, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed" (I Tim. vi. 1).

Apart from this servitude to the law, Paul's other references deal with the 'bondage' of corruption, and the fear of death (Rom. viii. 21; Heb. ii. 15), a state consequent upon the enslavement of sinful men. While Paul so thoroughly repudiated the shackles of legalism, he rejoiced in the bonds that bound him in happy devoted service to the Lord. Consequently we find *doulos*, a slave, used in two ways in Galatians elsewhere.

In a bad sense:

“There is neither *bond* nor free” (Gal. iii. 28).
“A child differeth nothing from a *servant*” (Gal. iv. 1).
“Wherefore thou art no more a *servant*” (Gal. iv. 7).

In a good sense:

“If I yet pleased men, I should not be the *servant* of Christ” (Gal. i. 19).

When we remember the words quoted above from the writings of Dr. John Taylor, and remember also that Paul knew by actual living experience what the condition of a *doulos* was in his own day, the full, complete, unreserved character of both his and of all true Christian ‘service’ begins to become apparent.

In like manner *douleuo* ‘to serve as a slave’ is used in two ways in Galatians and elsewhere.

In a bad sense:

“Ye *did* service unto them which by nature are no gods” (Gal. iv. 8).
“Ye desire again *to be in bondage*” (Gal. iv. 9).
“Jerusalem which now is, and is *in bondage* with her children” (Gal. iv. 25).

In a good sense:

“For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love *serve* one another” (Gal. v. 13).

The way in which the Apostle leads the believer out from the ‘yoke of bondage’ through Christian liberty, on to the ‘yoke of love’ is wonderful. The same word for yoke is used in a good sense in the well known words of Matt. xi. 29, 30, “Take my yoke upon you”, as is used in the evil sense already quoted above. As the reader ponders these two contrasted states ‘Bondage and Freedom’ and meditates upon the passages which contain them, he cannot help but attain to a fuller and richer realization of both the abject nature of the slavery of sin, law and death, the absolutely devoted character of Christian ‘service’, the complete emancipation of the redeemed, and the true quality of this freedom, ‘liberty’ but not ‘license’.

Although our allotted space is about filled, we cannot refrain from one further note. On the two occasions where the Apostle speaks of redemption in Galatians, he uses the word *exagorazo*. The *agora* or as the Romans called it, the *Forum*, was both the place of justice and the market place of the people. As for example:

“Children sitting in the markets” (Matt. xi. 16).

Agorazo, thus signifies ‘to buy’ (Matt. xiii. 44), and is used of the setting free of slaves in I Cor. vi. 20 “Ye are bought with a price”. *Exagorazo*, means to go into the market place of this world and to pay the price that is necessary to purchase the freedom

of the slaves of sin, death and law. This Christ did, as Gal. iii. 13 and iv. 5 affirm, dying as the accursed One on the tree, to set free the slaves of the law, dying as One made of a woman and made under the law, that those under its bondage may be emancipated. No wonder with the true values of bondage and freedom which we but dimly perceive, and which the Apostle saw so clearly, no wonder we repeat, he cries with such impassioned appeal:

“To the freedom with which Christ made us free, stand fast, and be not again held fast in a yoke of slavery” (Gal. v. 1).

It is not surprising that, having caught a glimpse of this blessed freedom, our own hymn-book contains such verses as these:

“Separated for the Father,
Saved to serve the Holy One,
Man-made bonds and fetters vanish
In His well-beloved Son”,

or,

“There is fullness of freedom, no fetters can bind
The soul that the Spirit of truth has set free;
When the light of God’s Word has illumined the mind,
There is full, unalloyed and complete liberty”,

or again,

“He has redeemed us, our sins are forgiven;
Now, as His members, One Body are we:
Bondage is past, all our fetters are riven,
None can enslave whom the Son has set free.”

No.3. A Study in Galatians.
“Works versus Faith.”
pp. 61 - 64

The great contrast between the works of the law and the faith of Jesus Christ occurs in Galatians in that historic contention which took place between the two apostles, Peter and Paul, when Peter's attitude and dissembling jeopardized the whole fabric of Gospel salvation.

“I said unto Peter before them all, if thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. ii. 14, 16).

On three other occasions Paul speaks of the works of the law in Galatians:

“Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” (Gal. iii. 2).

“He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?” (iii. 5).

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse” (iii. 10).

Once he speaks of the works of the flesh in contrast with the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians v. 19), and his last reference speaks of those true works which manifest the possession of life:

“Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another” (Gal. vi. 4).

It is evident that Paul has chiefly in mind in Galatians the works of the law. Now why should he be so certain that:

“As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse?” (Gal. iii. 10).

Let Paul answer for himself. He gives four comprehensive and searching reasons, which leave unregenerate man without hope.

(1) “Cursed is EVERYONE.” There is no respect of persons with God, and this is a two-edged argument that cuts both ways. In Rom. ii. Paul uses it to show that, should a Gentile by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour or immortality, the fact that he was a Gentile and not one of the favoured nation would not tell against him, for in this matter:

“There is no respect of persons with God” (Rom. ii. 11).

There are no exemptions or favours therefore to any who endeavour by works of law to produce righteousness before God. “Everyone” is leveled, the Jew to the same plane as the Gentile.

(2) “Cursed is every one that CONTINUETH NOT.” A spasmodic obedience is of no use here. An obedience that functioned on Sabbath days, but failed in the busy days of the work-a-day week, would not pass. There must be ‘continuance’. This charge was laid against Israel by the Lord:

“They *continued* not in My covenant, and I regarded them not” (Heb. viii. 9).

Where Israel failed there was no respect of the poor Gentile succeeding.

(3) “Cursed is every one that continueth not in ALL THINGS.” That which is a strong temptation to one man leaves another unmoved, but in the matter of law, we are not at liberty to choose the commandment we find comparatively easy and ignore the rest. “All things that are written” sound the death-knell to all hope in the flesh, and James has given us as a principle the statement:

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James ii. 10).

This sweeping statement becomes luminous in the light of Paul’s utterance:

“All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Gal. v. 14).

(4) “Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law TO DO THEM” (Gal. iii. 10). To do them! That is the one and only acknowledgment the law demands, and it is the one that no flesh can render. Many may approve the law. He may say with truth, that “the Mosaic law is the finest code ever introduced”. But God does not ask for patronage; He asks for obedience.

“The law is not of faith; but, the man that *doeth* them shall live in them” (Gal. iii. 12).

Scripture testimony forbids and personal experience disallows the possibility of any man passing this fourfold test. To be of the ‘works of law’ is to be indeed ‘under the curse’. In strong contrast with such deadly works, the Apostle places ‘faith’. “Faith” *pistis*, “to believe” *pisteuo*, and “faithful” *pistos* are derived from the passive form of *peitho* ‘to persuade’. Macknight has a comment on Rom. xiv. 23 which is helpful in view of this association of ‘faith’ and ‘being persuaded’.

“Here, as in verse 22, faith signifies, not the belief of the gospel, but the *persuasion* that what one doth is lawful. So understood, the Apostle’s declaration is perfectly just in every case; because if a man acts without that persuasion, he acts without any principle of virtue, being guided merely by his own inclinations.”

In Galatians “faith” *pistis* occurs many times, and under different categories.

- (1) The faith *of* Jesus Christ, *of* the Son of God (ii. 16, 20; iii. 22), where justification, life now in the flesh, and the receiving by the Gentiles of the promise of the Spirit are the associated themes.
- (2) The hearing *of faith*, they which be *of faith*, the household *of faith* (iii. 2, 5, 7, 9; iii. 12; vi. 10).
- (3) Faith as a medium “Through or by faith” *ek, dia*, (iii. 8 11, 14, 24, 26; v. 5).
- (4) Faith as a power and a fruit (v. 6, 22).
- (5) *The faith*, the substance of what is believed. “The faith which once he destroyed.” “Before faith came.” “Shut up to the faith.” “After that faith is come” (i. 23; iii. 23, 25).

As the reader weighs the statements that are made concerning the utter failure of man under law, the curse that must inevitably fall, the righteousness so unattainable and yet so necessary, and then contrasts this with the glorious triumph of faith; first the faith OF Christ, and then that faith which rests upon Him; finding blessing instead of cursing, justification instead of judgment, and then on new ground, to discover that “faith” ‘worketh’ by love; who could contemplate without deep feeling the attempt to lead these emancipated slaves back to the bondage of legalism? Not the Apostle Paul, and not any believer who has drunk of the same life-giving fountain. In this comparison, and Paul even wished that they were even cut off that troubled the church in this vital matter (Galatians ii. 6; v. 12). It is not our intention to pursue these contrasted features to their limits; to do so would demand a series of articles upon each of these antonyms. We hope to impress the reader with the value of this method, and to bring to light actual examples from the writings of Paul, which will provide a starting-place for those of our readers who may desire to carry these studies a stage further as a matter of private study and from personal interest. To all who are in any way engaged in teaching or preaching we would most earnestly commend this subject because it gives a clearer conception of the contrasted themes, and because such themes are most evident very near the basis of the faith. The fight is clearly a fight for ‘liberty’, and this liberty is one that concerns ‘faith’. This faith is no product of the flesh, but is of the ‘Spirit’ and is the expression of a ‘son’ not of a servant. The whole controversy is summed up by the fact that such are not under ‘law’ but under ‘grace’. To appreciate these distinctions therefore is to make for appreciation of the great epistles to the Galatians.

No.4. A Study in Galatians.
“Flesh versus Spirit.”
pp. 121 - 124

We have followed the Apostle in his battle for ‘liberty’ and have appreciated that liberty the better by the contrasted theme ‘bondage’. We have learned that ‘bondage’ and works of law go together, and that ‘liberty’ and faith go together. We now come to the third of these Galatian antonyms, and enter, as it were, into the atmosphere in which these contrasted movements are conducted.

Flesh versus Spirit.

There can be no question that these are antonyms, for the Apostle says:

“The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and *these are contrary* the one to the other: so that ye cannot do that ye would” (Gal. v. 17).

“Contrary” is *antikeimai* ‘to lie over against’, and in five passages is translated ‘adversary’. While there are eighteen occurrences of *sarx* ‘flesh’ and eighteen occurrences of *pneuma* ‘spirit’ in Galatians, there are six passages in which the Apostle places ‘flesh’ over against ‘spirit’ in his actual wording, while a number of other references are opposed by the very nature of their teaching. It is very difficult to decide whether ‘spirit’ should be rendered with a capital “S”, meaning the Holy Spirit, or with a small “s”, referring to the new nature which He gives to the believer. Possibly both meanings are included.

Let us see the actual antonyms first:

(1) *The first set of contrasts.*

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn from you, received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Gal. iii. 1-3).

(2) *The second set of contrasts.*

“But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now” (iv. 29).

(3) *The third set of contrasts.*

“This I say then, walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (v. 16).

(4, 5) *The fourth and fifth set of contrasts.*

“For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (v. 17).

(6) *The sixth set of contrasts.*

“For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (vi. 8).

To appreciate these steps through the epistle, we should remember that each has its own special aspect. The first emphasizes ‘beginning and ending’; the last emphasizes ‘sowing and reaping’. The second emphasizes the consequence of the opposition of flesh and spirit, namely ‘persecution’; the fourth and fifth emphasize the consequence of this antipathy, namely the inability to do the things that we would. The central set, the third, stresses the walk, and its effect upon the fulfilling of desire.

Set out graphically, the argument follows this course:

- A | iii. 1-3. Beginning in spirit and ending in flesh.
- B | iv. 29. Flesh persecuted those of the spirit even as now.
- C | v. 15. Walk influences desire.
- B | v. 17. The antipathy of flesh and spirit. Ye cannot do.
- A | vi. 8. Sowing and Reaping. Corruption or Everlasting Life.

We must await the actual exposition of the epistle to the Galatians before we can discuss just exactly what the Apostle meant by ‘spirit’ in each of these occurrences, for our present purpose the argument is evident and the purpose obvious. While it is suggestive that the two words ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ occur the same number of times in Galatians, there is one occurrence of *pneumatikos* ‘spiritual’ (Gal. vi. 1) which does not find its echo in *sarkikos* ‘carnal’ in Galatians. The great allegory of Gal. iv. 23-31 is introduced by the question:

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law” (Gal. iv. 21),

so it is evident that the conflict between ‘flesh and spirit’ is intimately related to the opposition of ‘law and grace’. This is demonstrated by the Apostle in his allegory, for he declares that the child of the flesh represents the Covenant of Sinai, while the child of promise (which is synonymous in some aspects with Paul’s use of ‘spirit’) represents the New Covenant, or with Jerusalem which is above. To be born of the ‘flesh’ and so under ‘law’ is to be born unto ‘bondage’; to be born of ‘promise’ or after the ‘Spirit’ is to be born ‘free’, and to sum up the tale, none but the ‘free’ can become the ‘heir’. Here in this allegory Paul intertwines four out of the five sets of contrast which we have tabulated.

- (1) “Liberty versus Bondage” (iv. 22, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31).
- (3) “Spirit versus Flesh” (iv. 23, 29).
- (4) “Servants versus Sons” (iv. 22, 30, 31).
- (5) “Law versus Grace” (iv. 21, 24).

No.2 in our list is not actually mentioned, but the whole teaching of the epistle necessitates that ‘faith versus works’ must have been in the Apostle’s mind all the time, and he reaches them in the sequel of chapter v.

“For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love” (Gal. v. 5, 6).

Reverting to the references to ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ we just draw attention to the necessity to distinguish between the various usages of these words. For example: “The life I now live in the flesh” (Gal. ii. 20) cannot mean that Paul lived ‘after the flesh’ for he says he so lived ‘by the faith of the Son of God’. Again when he spoke of the ‘infirmity’ and the ‘temptation’ which was in his flesh when he first visited the Galatians (Gal. iv. 13, 14), we must not think of some dreadful moral lapse on the part of the Apostle, for the Galatians at that very time had received him as ‘an angel of God’ (iv. 14) and through this infirmity in his flesh, he had actually ‘preached the gospel’ at the first. Again, when he declares that he ‘conferred not with flesh and blood’, he does not mean ‘flesh’ in its moral sense, but he explains by amplifying his words ‘Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me’ (i. 16, 17). Similarly with the word ‘spirit’, after the question in chapter iii. 1-3 ‘received ye the spirit?’ we have in verse 5 the ministering of the spirit in connection with ‘working miracles’, which also may be partly in mind in Gal. iii. 14.

“That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

This miraculous element, however, is foreign to the references we have just considered, for the fruit of the Spirit, namely, ‘love, joy, peace’, has no connection with spiritual ‘gifts’ as such. We cannot pursue this matter here, but we felt just a hint was necessary for the guidance of those who use these articles as steps to the fuller and personal study of the epistles themselves.

No.5. A Study in Galatians.

“Servants versus Sons.”

pp. 146 - 150

We have now arrived at the fourth of Paul’s Galatian antonyms, namely “Servants versus Sons”. There are several words which are translated ‘servant’ in the N.T. and each has its own special significance. Let us begin our study with a tabulation of these different aspects of service.

- (1) *Doulos*. “A slave”, one ‘bound’ to serve, from *deo* ‘to bind’. “When used of ordinary service it indicates the lowest scale of servitude, but when transferred to Christian service, it expresses the highest devotion of one who is bound by love” (Dr. Bullinger).
- (2) *Pais*. This word first of all means a child, either boy or girl, then a servant, very much in the same way that the French word *garçon* which means a boy, is used for a waiter or a porter etc.

- (3) *Diakonos*. If this word be derived from *dioko* to pursue, it would emphasize the alacrity and diligence of the service rendered. It is of course the origin of our 'deacon'.
- (4) *Oiketes*. A domestic servant, *oikos* meaning 'house'.
- (5) *Huperetes*. An under-rower, with reference to the galley slaves who worked at the oars.
- (6) *Therapon*. Ministering care. In English, *therapy* means the medical treatment of disease.

There is only one word for 'servant' in Galatians, it is *doulos* 'a slave' (i. 10; iv. 1, 7). There is only one word for 'serve' in Galatians, it is *douleuo* 'to serve as a slave' (v. 13), and there is but one word for 'service' in this epistle namely *douleuo* 'do service' (iv. 8).

When the Apostle linked the words 'serve' and 'son' together in Phil. ii. 22, "As a son with a father, he hath served with me in the gospel", or in the epistles to Timothy (I Tim. i. 18; II Tim. ii. 1) where he exhorts his 'son' in the faith to service, Paul uses the affectionate term *teknon* or 'bairn'. Here in Galatians, he places the 'slave' in strong contrast with the 'son', and as this word 'son' is of great importance to the understanding of the argument of Galatians, we must devote some time in becoming acquainted with its meaning and usage. The Greek word translated 'son' in the sentence "Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son" in Gal. iv. 7, is the Greek word *huios*. Four of the occurrences of *huios* in Galatians refer to Christ Himself.

"When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me" (Gal. i. 15, 16).

"I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me" (ii. 20).

"When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son" (iv. 4).

"God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (iv. 6).

The rest of the occurrences refer to men, either believers 'because ye are sons' (iv. 6), or to the sons of Sarah and Hagar (iv. 22-30). The English reader should note that two passages are wrongly translated 'children' in the A.V. which the Revisers were careful to alter. They are:

"They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." This should read "sons of Abraham" (iii. 7).

"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." This should read "sons of God" (iii. 26).

When the Apostle wished to speak of the Galatians as 'little children' he had a suitable word at his command:

"My little children" *teknion*, the diminutive of *teknon* (Gal. iv. 19).

Or where he wished to speak simply of children, he used *teknon* (iv. 25, 27, 28, 31), and where he wanted to introduce the figure of a babe, he used *nepios*, which occurs in Gal. iv. 1 and 3. It is therefore a great pity that we slur over these distinctions, especially when the very argument of Galatians turns upon the meaning of *huios* a 'son', as distinct from *teknon* or *nepios* 'children'.

Bishop Westcott, writing in *Some Lessons of the Revised Version of the New Testament* says of these two great words *huios* and *teknon*:

“There is the position of ‘sonship’ (characteristic of the teaching of St. Paul), which suggests thoughts of privilege, of inheritance, of dignity; and there is also the position of ‘childship’ (characteristic of the teaching of St. John), which suggests the thoughts of community of nature, of dependence, of tender relationship. Sons may be adopted; children can only be born. The two conceptions are evidently complementary; but they must be realized separately before the full force of the whole idea which they combine to give, can be felt.”

The full value of the Greek word ‘son’ and the idea of privilege that it contains, cannot be estimated apart from a knowledge of what is intended by the word translated ‘adoption’ which is *huiiothesia* ‘the placing as a son’. Israel, God’s firstborn among the nations, had this ‘adoption’ as their distinctive privilege (Rom. ix. 1-5). The seed of Abraham, partakers of the heavenly calling, the church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven, whose mother is Jerusalem that is above, this company have the right of the adoption as their special privilege (Gal. iv. 5) which is very parallel with the ‘birthright’ which Esau despised (Heb. xii. 16) and which these members of the heavenly calling were urged to avoid. Then the Church of the Mystery, the calling that pertains to the dispensation of the grace of God among the Gentiles of today, that also has, in its super-heavenly sphere, this privilege of ‘adoption’ (Eph. i. 3-5). If our contention is true, namely, that John’s Gospel ministers to the great outside world, while Paul’s prison ministry ministers to the smaller circle of the Mystery, it is but another evidence in its favour, that whereas Paul speaks of the believer as both ‘children of God’ and ‘sons of God’, for all the ‘sons’ are of course ‘children’ too, John *never* calls a believer a ‘son of God’, he always refers to them as ‘children’, and the reader is advised to follow the R.V. here where the necessary correction has been faithfully carried out.

The idea of both ‘son’ and ‘adoption’ is the appointing of the heir. Now we have already learned from the allegory of Isaac and Ishmael (Gal. iv. 22-30) that the child of the *bondwoman* cannot inherit with the child of the free. One of the characteristics of a ‘child’ as distinct from a ‘son’ says Gal. iv. 1-3 is that even though lord of all, yet is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. In this state and period, he ‘differeth nothing from a servant’ (Gal. iv. 1).

“But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem (*exagorazo*, ‘buy out of the market place’) them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Gal. iv. 4-6).

Selden has shown that slaves were not permitted to use this word in addressing the master of the family, which enables us to see the aptness of the introduction of such a strange word here. *Ab*, is the Hebrew ‘father’, but *Abba* is the Chaldee equivalent. As the Aramaic or Chaldee does not possess the definite article, the lack is compensated by the addition of a syllable at the end, thereby rendering the word either emphatic, “The Father”, or putting it into the vocative “O Father”. Lightfoot says:

“As it is necessary to distinguish between the Hebrew and Chaldee idiom in the word *abi* and *abba*, so you *may*, I had almost said, you *must*, distinguish of their sense. For the word *abi*, signifies indeed a natural father, but withal a civil father, also an elder, a master, a doctor, a magistrate: but the word *abba*, denotes only a natural father: yea, it denotes, ‘My father’.”

Lightfoot gives a series of examples which are not intelligible unless the exact Hebrew and Chaldee is printed. His statement though giving practically the truth of the matter, is not to be taken to be the rule without an exception, for John Nicholson, translator of Ewald’s Hebrew Grammar, cites the Targum translation of Gen. xlv. 8 and of Job xxxviii. 28 as exceptions, and also says that according to Buxtorf’s Lexicon to the Talmud, the Talmudical writers did occasionally use *abba* to express *rabbi* and *master*, but these few exceptions do not alter the fact that the slave was not permitted to use this very personal name *abba*, O Father.

“Wherefore” continues the Apostle, “thou are no more a slave but a son; and if a son then an heir of God through Christ” (Gal. iv. 7).
“If a son then an heir.”

Here then is another set of contrasting names, servant versus son, and if we have hitherto underestimated the glory of being not only a ‘child’ but a ‘son’ of God, we trust Paul’s blessed antonym will have been the means of leading the read into fuller light.

No.6. A Study in Galatians.

“Law versus Grace.”

pp. 175 - 180

We have now reached the fifth and last of the great antonyms of the epistle to the Galatians, “Law versus Grace”, and although this set comes last, it really underlies all the rest. For:

- if the change of state from bondage to liberty be a change only just short of a change from death to life, and
- if the change of instrument, faith instead of works, be like the coming of peace after war, and
- if the change from the flesh to the spirit be like the exchange from despair to triumph, and
- if the change from the condition of servitude to that of sonship be a translation from what is most abject to what is truly glorious,

then the change of dispensation from that of law to that of grace must be one of the most important features of truth that the believer can know.

And yet, how many true believers have spoken slightly of ‘Dispensational Truth’, not realizing that until the dispensation of law gave place to that of grace, liberty though

longed for, was unattainable, for the law 'gendereth to bondage' and nothing but 'the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus' could make the sinner 'free' (Rom. viii. 2). Those who were 'kept under the law', were necessarily 'shut up' unto the faith that could only come with the advent of Christ (Gal. iii. 23). The priceless gift of liberty therefore is only possible to those who are no longer under law but under grace.

So also with regard to 'faith'. Gal. iii. 12 declares that 'The law is not of faith'; the law demands deeds, and where these works of the law are not produced, condemnation must fall. Yet 'the works of the law' have failed because of the weakness of the flesh, and as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse (Gal. iii. 10). The blessed exercise of faith therefore is only possible to those who are no longer under law but under grace.

Then what shall we say of the 'Spirit'? "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty", and the Apostle calls the Old Covenant of the law 'the letter that killeth', but he calls the New Covenant grace 'the Spirit that giveth life', and the ministration of the New Covenant of grace as 'the ministration of the Spirit' (II Cor. iii.). The law itself was rendered 'weak through the flesh' (Rom. viii. 3), and we have learned that they which are 'in the flesh' cannot please God. However much we perceive the utter failure of the flesh, we can never know the living power of the Spirit while under the legal dispensation. So it is with the condition of servants which by grace has been exchanged for that of sons. All such have been redeemed from 'under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons' (Gal. iv. 5).

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. v. 4).

The Apostle has much to say about the law in this epistle and we are faced with a tremendous fullness of expression when we attempt to analyze his teaching on the subject. The thirty-two occurrences of the word *nomos*, demand 32 studies to do the most elementary justice to their variety and importance. This we can only acknowledge but not attempt.

Where we cannot attain to perfection however, we may assay something less ambitious, and though fully conscious of its inadequacy, to begin this great study, we present the following analysis of the Apostle Paul's use of 'law'.

Nomos. Law in Galatians.

(1) The law and righteousness.

"A man is not justified by the works of the law" (ii. 16).

"By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (ii. 16).

"If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (ii. 21).

"That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident" (iii. 11).

"If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (iii. 21).

“It is evident” said the Apostle (and his survey of the law as a means of righteousness reveals the weakness of the law [*?flesh*]) that the law means nothing apart from ‘works’. A law that is never obeyed is a law that virtually does not exist. Consequently therefore, while the Apostle sometimes says the law justified no one, he is explicit elsewhere and says it is the ‘works’ of the law attempted by ‘the flesh’ that make justification by the law impossible. There is nothing wrong in the law itself; it is the failure of all flesh to conform to its high demands that makes justification by law impossible to man. It will be no vain repetition to summarize the Apostle’s teaching under another heading, namely:

(2) *The Law and Works.*

“A man is not justified by *the works* of the law not by *the works* of the law: for by *the works* of the law shall no flesh be justified” (ii. 16).

“Received ye the Spirit by *the works* of the law?” (iii. 2).

“He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles doeth he it by *the works* of the law?” (iii. 5).

“For as many as are of *the works* of the law are under the curse” (iii. 10).

“I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor *to do* the whole law” (v. 3).

If the failure of the law to justify the sinner resides in the necessity to produce acceptable ‘works’ which the flesh is quite unable to produce, and if nevertheless man can be justified before God, then some other way must have been found and so we have already discovered (No.3 of this series) that ‘works of law’ give place to the ‘faith of Christ’. This brings us to the redeeming work of Christ.

(3) *The Law and the Cross.*

“For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God, I am crucified with Christ” (ii. 19, 20).

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (iii. 13).

“When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law” (iv. 4, 5).

One other argument concerning the law must be noticed and that is the purpose which it served, in view of the fact that it was a foregone conclusion that it would prove to be a ministry of condemnation and death.

(4) *The Law and the Promise.*

(a) Using the illustration of a “man’s covenant (or will)” and relying upon the knowledge that the Galatians had of the law obtaining in Asia Minor concerning the making of a “will”, the Apostle says:

“Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto And this I say, that the covenant which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect” (iii. 15, 17).

(b) The question must inevitably come from every exercised heart ‘wherefore then serveth the law?’, and the answer is “It is added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come” (Gal. iii. 19).

(c) Another question comes to the surface.

“Is the law then against the promises of God?” (iii. 21).

The answer given in the subsequent verses shows that while the law could not mediate the promises, it could lead the seeking soul to the only One Who could, namely Christ.

“Before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed. So that the law hath been our tutor *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor” (iii. 23-25 R.V.).

Neither ‘life’, ‘righteousness’, ‘inheritance’ or ‘promise’ came by the law (iii. 21; ii. 21; iii. 18)

What change therefore has been made by God in order that these blessed results might accrue? ‘Grace’ is the answer. The epistle to the Galatians states the fact that grace has taken the place of law, but it does not explain it or amplify its bearing upon the question of its effect upon the relationship of man and God, of sin and righteous judgment, of the justification of God Who justifies the ungodly. For this the reader must study the epistle to the Romans, where both the question of ‘law’ and ‘grace’ is given an exhaustive exposition. What is said however of grace in Galatians is blessed, and on page 180 we present the seven occurrences of *charis*. To him that hath ears to hear and eyes to see, the five great contrasts of Galatians and the structure following will show the earnest student his walk in life if he would follow the argument of the Apostle of liberty, faith, sonship, Spirit and grace.

Charis. Grace in Galatians.

A | i. 3. Opening Salutation.

Prefaced by reference to “Not of men, neither by man”
and the evidence of his apostleship (verse 1).

B | i. 6. Removal from the grace of Christ.

Reference to “Him that called you”.

Also references to “another gospel which is not another”
and to “some who had troubled them”.

Strong denunciation even of an angel that preached any other gospel,
“let him be accursed”. “If I yet please men.” “Do I now persuade men?”.

C | i. 15. The grace manifested in the Apostle’s call

was characterized by the revelation of “the Son of God” in him,
and this grace was not frustrated either by disobedience
or by conference with flesh and blood.

D | ii. 9. “The grace that was given unto me.”

In this epistle more stress is placed upon the messenger.

In Romans where the question of Paul’s apostleship was settled,
the stress is placed upon his message.

C | ii. 21. The grace of God not frustrated by the gospel.

So far as the life in the flesh is concerned Paul had died
and now lived the faith of “the Son of God”.

B | v. 4. Fallen from grace.

Reference to “Him that calleth you”.

Also reference to being “otherwise minded”
and to him that “troubleth you”.

Strong denunciation of any who troubled the church.

“I would they were cut off”. “If I yet preach circumcision.” “This persuasion.”

A | vi. 183. Closing benediction,

preceded by reference to the “marks” of his adherence to Christ
and to “no man”.

If the treatment of ‘grace’ is not so full as that which we find in Romans or Ephesians,
yet this perfect distribution and the perfect number of occurrences (seven) cannot fail to
impress the believing reader.